

Rep. Lesia Liss (District 28) - Hoping to read this tomorrow

From: Lori Adlape <lstrangel@yahoo.com>
To: <lesialiss@house.mi.gov>
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Subject: Hoping to read this tomorrow

Thank you, Committee members for allowing testimony today.

My name is Lori Adlape and I'm here in hope that you will consider releasing Bills 4006 and 4015 to the full House for voting. Because these Bills make adoptee's relinquished between May 1945 and September 1980 equal to all other Michigan-born adoptee's.

I was 16 when I relinquished my daughter in 1972.

No, I wasn't coerced, no I didn't get to hold her, and no, I never forgot my daughter.

I was given no paperwork, I was NOT promised anonymity, nor did I *want* it.

I *was* asked for medical history and I gave what amounted to nothing because our families were young, there was nothing to tell.

That did however change over the next 30 years.

No one told me updates were expected. No one told me that my daughter's records would be sealed away from her after the age of 18.

What I was told, was to go home, forget 9 months of pregnancy, 3 days of labor and a C section ever happened.

I was told, that my daughter and I might meet again, after she turned 18. I was told that she would be given her documents, and IF she wanted to search, she would have all the information she needed to find me.

I was *repeatedly* told that UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES was I to search for my daughter. I was told that if I did search, I would be arrested. Not *could* be arrested..... *would* be arrested.

I never searched.

When my daughter turned 18, I was ready for her. The agency was finally going to give her her documents, and she was going to find me. I waited... and waited.... and waited. A total of 28 years.

My daughter finally found me when I was 44 years old.

One of the first things she told me was, that it didn't matter why I put her up for adoption. She didn't care. That she always knew she was adopted and she figured I must have had a reason.

She told me she had a good life, great parents, and a sister.

You have *no idea* how much *those words* meant to me.

When we met face to face we combed each other like monkeys grooming. My daughter was a little disappointed the mirror image wasn't there,

But we found other things to let us know we were from the same gene pool. Hands, short legs and long torso's, and feet, no woman would claim if she didn't have to.

One day my daughter called saying my grandson was having some medical problems and her doctor told her to *go find the rest of her medical history and find it fast*.

I found her father within a few weeks and we arranged a meeting. We think we've found a link to her son's problems. I say *think* because it seems to have gone away for now.

In finding her father, my daughter also found her mirror image. The family she resembles. She has her grand mothers nose.

After 8 years in reunion, her *sister* decided *she* wanted to meet me.

As I talked, her sister stared, in disbelief. The physical appearance wasn't there, but the mannerisms,

gestures, cadence in our speech, were identical, and for the first time she truly understood her sister. You see, her parents were told that I was on drugs while carrying her. They spent my daughters entire life thinking she acted the way she did because of drug exposure. They were absolutely floored when they found out I 16 not 13, that I wasn't a runaway, that I knew who her father was, and that the agency and I just created a fictitious name in order to protect him because he was 20 years old.

By the way, he never forgot about her either.

A few months later I met her parents. We now have a BBQ at their house once a year.

My point is we worked it out.

We didn't need anyone to intervene, we just needed time.

Time for her parents to *accept me* without feeling like they were going to *lose her*.

Time for me to be comfortable enough to *face them*.

And time for my daughter and I to carve out our own relationship. That is, after all, what adults do.

I have 6 grand children. Two of them are directly affected by my daughters sealed records. No one's children, grand children, or great grand children should be so negatively affected (held hostage) by something that had nothing to do with them directly.

The opposition has stated that changing these laws would hurt women who were promised confidentiality, yet laws change all the time.

A perfect example of that would be changing the law to seal records, or the Federal Government now wanting OBC's that have been sealed by the State, as proof to obtain passports if an adoption takes longer than one year to finalize.

How is anyone supposed to know *for sure* when an adoption is going to finalize?

Yet they changed that law anyway, leaving a lot of people, *adopted people*, with few options to travel the world on their hard earned, saved up vacation, or in their supposed "*golden years*".

Some don't want to admit that adoptee's don't have the same rights as non adopted citizens. That they're not allowed the same positive personal image yet their lives are testimony, proving over and over that *this is* the case for most citizens who have been blessed through adoption.

These Bills will allow all Michigan born adoptee's equality in access, not just those born before March 28th 1945 and those after September 11th 1980, but ALL Michigan-born adoptee's.

In closing I'd like to say that I would have given *anything* (with the exception of another child) to spend 10 minutes with my daughter... to just see her face and know she was okay. I have been blessed with over ten years.

Our reunion has healed me, my daughter, her father, possibly my grandson, and allowed her parents and sister to truly understand her for the first time.

Sealing my daughters records was not something I knowingly signed up for.

And I'm disappointed that this is considered what is in the best interest of my child, let alone her children, or any other children to come into my family through her.

And BTW we're still waiting to be matched by the Central Adoption Registry.

I have given a lot of thought to what my information means to me, a non adoptee. I have to admit, its more than personal. I do believe it is the most intimate part of me.

Random Houses College Dictionary describes "intimate" as not just engaged in sexual relations or quaint little places, but as "an association, knowledge, understanding, arising from close personal connections or familiar experiences. As Pertaining to or characteristic of the inmost or essential nature. Intrinsic. Belonging to a thing by its very nature.

Release Bills 4006 and 4015 to the full House for voting. Allow ALL Michigan-born adoptee's equal access. Allow all Michigan born adoptee's to be equal.

Thank You
Lori Aldape
603 W Main
Manton Mi 49663
231-824-9906